

## Sophister Module Description Template 2026-27

**Full Name:** Elizabeth Bowen's Short Stories and Novels

**Short Name:** Elizabeth Bowen's Short Stories and Novels

**Lecturer Name(s) and Email Address(es):** Dr Brendan Fleming (brflem@tcd.ie)

**ECTS Weighting:** 10

**Semester Taught MT/HT:** MT

**Year JF/SF/JS/SS:** SS

### Module Content:

This module affords students the opportunity to deepen their understanding of Elizabeth Bowen's short stories and novels by placing them within their wider political, historical and cultural contexts. The module will complement those of **Irish Writing** and **Modernisms: Making it New**. Themes that will be addressed: Bowen's negotiation of Irish and British identities; her representation of war and its effects; portrayals of childhood and adolescence. Her evolving reputation will be explored through a consideration of the dynamics of canon formation and critical legacy. The module will interrogate her use of the gothic and the ghostly within a modernist context.

1. Introduction
2. Elizabeth Bowen and her Contemporaries
3. *The Last September* (1929)
4. *The House in Paris* (1935)
5. *The Death of the Heart* (1938)
6. *The Demon Lover and Other Stories* (1945)
7. Reading Week
8. *The Heat of the Day* (1948)
9. Selection of Short Stories
10. *A World of Love* (1955)
11. *Eva Trout* (1969)
12. Conclusion

### Learning Outcomes

On completion of the module, students should be able to:

- Demonstrate an increased knowledge and understanding of the short stories and fiction of Elizabeth Bowen
- Assess the significance of the historical, political and cultural contexts of Bowen's work
- Reflect on the factors which are involved in canon formation and the evolution of Bowen's critical reputation within such a context

- Discuss the appropriacy of critical and theoretical arguments applied to Bowen's work
- Evaluate the applicability of categories such as 'modernism' and 'gothic' to Bowen's writing

### Learning Aims:

- Increased understanding of the nexus of twentieth century Irish and British writing
- Development of skills of critical thinking and reflection
- Awareness of the determining factors involved in canon formation
- Increased understanding of scholarly and research protocols necessary for academic writing

### Assessment Details:

- Number of Components: Two
- Name/Type of Component(s): Midterm essay and final essay
- Word Count of Component(s): (2,000) Midterm essay and (4,000) final essay
- Percentage Value of Component(s): (30%) Midterm essay and (70%) final essay

### Preliminary Reading List

#### Primary Texts

- *The Last September* [1929] (London: Vintage, 1988)
- *The House in Paris* [1935] (London: Vintage, 1998)
- *The Death of the Heart* [1938] (London: Vintage, 1998)
- *The Demon Lover and Other Stories* [1945] in *Collected Stories of Elizabeth Bowen* (London: Vintage, 1999)
- *The Heat of the Day* [1948] (London: Vintage, 1998)
- *Collected Stories of Elizabeth Bowen* (London: Vintage, 1999)
- *A World of Love* [1955] (London: Vintage, 1999)
- *Eva Trout* [1969] (London: Vintage, 1999)
- *People, Places, Things: Essays by Elizabeth Bowen*, ed. Allan Hepburn (Edinburgh: Edinburgh UP, 2008)
- *The Mulberry Tree: Writings of Elizabeth Bowen*, ed. Hermione Lee (New York: Harcourt, 1986)
- *"Notes on Eire": Espionage Reports to Winston Churchill, 1940-2, with a Review of Irish Neutrality in World War 2*, ed. by Jack Lane and Brendan Clifford (Mill Street, Ireland: Aubane Historical Society, 1999)

#### Recommendations for Secondary Reading

- Atkins, John, *Six novelists look at society an enquiry into the social views of Elizabeth Bowen, L.P. Hartley, Rosamund Lehman(n), Christopher Isherwood, Nancy Mitford, C.P. Snow* (London: J.Calder, 1977)
- Bennett, Andrew and Nicholas Royle (eds), *Elizabeth Bowen and the Dissolution of the Novel: Still Lives* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1995)
- Bloom, Harold (ed.), *Elizabeth Bowen* (New York: Chelsea House, 1987)
- Bryant, Heather Jordan, *How Will the Heart Endure: Elizabeth Bowen and the Landscape of War* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 1992)
- Corcoran, Neil, *Elizabeth Bowen: The Enforced Return* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004, repr. 2008)
- Coughlan, Patricia, 'Women and Desire in the Work of Elizabeth Bowen', in *Sex, Nation and Dissent in Irish Writing*, ed. Éibhear Walshe (Cork: Cork University Press, 1997), pp.103-34
- Ellmann, Maud, *Elizabeth Bowen: The Shadow Across the Page* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh UP, 2003)
- Foster, Roy, 'The Irishness of Elizabeth Bowen', in *Paddy & Mr Punch: Connections in Irish and English History*
- Glendinning, Victoria, *Elizabeth Bowen: A Biography* (New York: Anchor, 2005)
- Hepburn, Allan (ed.), *Elizabeth Bowen in Context* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2026)
- Kiberd, Declan, 'Elizabeth Bowen: The Dandy in Revolt', in *Sex, Nation and Dissent in Irish Writing*, ed. Éibhear Walshe (Cork: Cork University Press, 1997). Also in Declan Kiberd, *Inventing Ireland: the Literature of the Modern Nation* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1995), pp.364-79
- Johnson, Kathryn, '“Phantasmagoric Hinterlands”: Adolescence and Anglo-Ireland in Elizabeth Bowen's *The House in Paris* and *The Death of the Heart*', in *Irish Women Writers: New Critical Perspectives*, eds Elke D' hoker, Raphaël Ingelbien and Hedwig Schwall (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2011), pp.207-25
- Lassner, Phyllis, *Elizabeth Bowen* (London: Macmillan. 1990)
- Lee, Hermione, *Elizabeth Bowen* (London: Vintage, 1999) 2<sup>nd</sup> edition
- Lonquist, Barbara, 'Sexual Cryptographies and War in Virginia Woolf's *Between the Acts* and Elizabeth Bowen's *The Heat of the Day*', in *Virginia Woolf and her Female Contemporaries*, Julie Vandivere and Megan Hicks (eds), (Liverpool: Liverpool UP, 2016)
- McGuinness, Max, and Michael Cronin (eds), *The Irish Proust: Cultural Crossings from Beckett to McGahern* (London: Bloomsbury, 2026)
- Palko, Abigail, 'Colonial modernism's thwarted maternity: Elizabeth Bowen's *The House in Paris* and Jean Rhys's *Voyage in the Dark*', in *Textual Practice*, 27:1 (2013), pp.89-108
- Patten, Eve, *Ireland, Revolution, and the English Modernist Imagination* (Oxford: OUP, 2022)
- Radford, Jean, 'Late Modernism and the Politics of History', in *Women Writers of the 1930s: Gender, Politics and History*, ed. Maroula Joannou (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1999), pp.33-45
- Walshe, Éibhear (ed.), *Elizabeth Bowen* (Dublin and Portland, OR: Irish Academic Press, 2009)
- -- (ed.), *Elizabeth Bowen remembered: the Farrahy addresses* (Dublin: Four Courts, 1998)

Journal Articles

- Chessman, Harriet S., 'Women and Language in the Fiction of Elizabeth Bowen', *Twentieth Century Literature*, 29, No. 1 (Spring, 1983), pp.69-85. JSTOR
- Daiches, David, 'The Novels of Elizabeth Bowen', *English Journal*, 38, No.6 (June 1949), pp.305-13, JSTOR
- Jordan, Heather Bryant, 'A Bequest of Her Own: The Reinvention of Elizabeth Bowen', *New Hibernia Review*, 12, No.2 (2008), pp.46 -62. JSTOR
- Kershner, Jr., R.B., 'Bowen's Oneiric House in Paris', *Texas Studies in Literature and Language*, 28, No.4 (Winter ,1986), pp.407-23
- Laing, Kathryn, 'Virginia Woolf in Ireland: a Short Voyage Out', *South Carolina Review*, Vol. 34: 1, (2001), pp.180-87
- Voller, Jack G., 'Joseph Sheridan LeFanu', *Literary Gothic*, 2 August 2010. Web 12 November 2013
- *Textual Practice*, Special issue on Elizabeth Bowen, 27:1 (2013)

Please note:

- Curricular information is subject to change.
- Information is displayed only for guidance purposes, relates to the current academic year only and is subject to change.